بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمـــَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of **Allah**, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani (ra)

The Rose of Baghdad

by Adam Hani Walker, UK

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani (ra)

> *''Some natures have a spiritual affinity with others. In this way my soul has an affinity with the soul of Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani and I have been made aware of it through clear spiritual visions. About thirty years back one night God informed me that He had chosen me for His own. By a strange coincidence an old woman who was about eighty years of age saw a dream the same night and related it to me the next morning that she had seen Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be pleased with him) in her dream. He was accompanied by another eminent personage both wearing green dresses. The second person was somewhat younger than Syed Abdul Qadir. First they offered prayer in our Jum'a Masjid and then they emerged into the courtyard of the mosque. The woman stood near them and presently a bright star appeared in the East. Syed Abdul Qadir was very happy at its appearance and addressing it greeted it with: Peace be on you. His companion also offered the greeting of peace. That star was my self. She saw this in the latter part of the night. As has been said: A believer see visions him-self and visions about him are vouchsafed to others''*[1]

Here the Promised Messiah (as) talks of the magnificent friend and lover of Allah (swt) Hadhrat Sayyed Muhyidin Abu Mohammad Abdul Qadir al-Jilani (ra). Anyone who has the fortune to come across the life and works of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (ra) will be in no doubt as to why the soul of the Promised Messiah (as) had such a close affinity with that of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra). His every pour yearned to serve Allah (swt) and he is indeed to be counted from amongst the greatest of the Awliyaa Allah *(friends of Allah)*. Commenting on his complete subservience to the will of Allah (swt), Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra) writes[2]:

> *''Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani in one of his books says: "There is a time when I do not eat until God is pleased to say: Abdul Qadir, get up and eat for My sake, or wear these robes to please Me.' It is men like him who would do even their daily chores only when God wants them to; of course, not for their own sake but for the sake of God, for whatever they do, they do it to please Him."*

Both the Promised Messiah (as) and Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani were consumed with the love of the Holy Prophet (saw) and it is the great blessing of Allah (swt) that both of these great champions of humanity shared both a spiritual and blood affinity. For they are related to each other through the line of the Holy Prophet's (saw) beloved daughter, Sayyeda of the women of the worlds, Hadhrat Fatima Az-Zahra (ra)[3].

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[1] Zameem, Braheen Ahmadiyya part V p. 65 footnote
[2] Way of the Seekers, Ch.14
[3] See. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Al-Tadhkirah. Pg.59, Ft.1.

By way of introduction, this great personage of Islam, Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) was born in 470 A.H. (1077-78 C.E.) and of Persian descent (coming from the area of Jilan). One of his many titles (kunya) is *'al-Hasani wal Husseini'* because he was blessed with direct lineage to the Holy Prophet (saw) through his father Hadhrat Abu Saleh Zangi Dost (ra) who was a direct descendant of Imam Hassan (ra); and also through his mother Hadhrat Bibi Ummul Khair Fatima (ra) who was a direct descendant of Imam Hussein (ra). The circumstances surrounding the blessed marriage of Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) and Hadhrat Bibi Ummul Khair (ra) were quite miraculous to say the least. It is said that one day Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra), who was renowned for his great piety, was walking along a riverbank when he came across an apple which he picked up and ate. Upon reflection, he became extremely worried as he feared that in eating the apple he may have taken something that was not rightfully his to take. Perhaps his worry was ignited by the following incident involving the Holy Prophet (saw)[4],

> *The Prophet passed a date fallen on the way and said, "Were I not afraid that it may be from a Sadaqa (charitable gifts), I would have eaten it."*

In order to rectify the situation he searched for the owner of the apple until he came to a garden filled with apples which was owned by a man called Hadhrat Abdullah Sawmai Az-Zahid (ra). Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) offered his sincere apology which Hadhrat Abdullah (ra) said he would accept on the condition that Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) spent some time maintaining his garden[5]. Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) agreed and obediently tended to the upkeep of the garden. After some time had passed Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) was released from his obligation but with the final condition that he should marry the daughter of Hadhrat Abdullah (ra) who was said to be blind, deaf, and handicapped in both the arms and legs. With great obedience and humility Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) accepted this condition and married the daughter of Hadhrat Abdullah (ra). On the wedding night he met his new wife for the first time and found that the lady in front of him was blessed with great beauty and seemed very able bodied. Her appearance was so far from the description he had originally been given that he immediately exited thinking that he had entered the wrong room. Hadhrat Abdullah (ra) approached him and explained, to the astonishment of Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra), that his original words were far from a deception saying,

> *"O Prince, this is your wife and whatever I had said about her is true. She is blind in that she has never lifted her eyes towards a non-Mahram (non-marriageable relative). She is deaf in that she has never heard anything against the Shariah. She is handicapped in the hand in that she has never touched anything against the Shariah with them, and she is handicapped in the legs in that she has never stepped out of the house against the Shariah."*

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[4] Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.3, Bk.42, No.612.

[5] Some narrations say that this agreement was made on the basis that Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) would serve Hadhrat Abdullah (ra) for twelve years.

It was under these most blessed and heart warming circumstances that Hadhrat Abu Saleh (ra) al-Hasani and Hadhrat Bibi Ummul Khair Fatima (ra) al-Husseini married. These were the righteous parents of a son called Hadhrat Abdul Qadir al-Jilani (ra) and it was from their home that Allah (swt) gave the blessing of Wilayah (Sainthood) and Mujadidiyyah (Reformership).

He was thus blessed with a pious upbringing and at the age of 18 embarked upon a great spiritual journey lasting some seventy-one years which saw him elevated to the lofty station of Mujadadiyyat and perhaps even beyond. One day he came to his mother and told her that he wanted to go to Baghdad to seek knowledge. On seeing how intent he was she began to weep and brought him forty gold coins which she sewed into a pocket in the armpit of his jacket. On setting off from his home town for Baghdad his blessed mother gave him the following advice[6],

1. *Obey God's Commandments*
2. *Abstain from forbidden things*
3. *Be always pleased with the decree of providence*
4. *Always be truthful*

A close study of the remaining seventy-one years of his miraculous life is testament to the fact that he never lost sight of his mother's treasured advice and always remained steadfast to her loving words of wisdom. This is another sign of his complete obedience to Allah (swt) for surely He (swt) has instructed mankind,

((وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ))

[31:15] *"And We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents - his mother bears him in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning takes two years - and said, 'Give thanks to Me and thy parents. Unto Me is the final return"*

A famous incident which illustrates his obedience to his mother occurred shortly after him leaving for Baghdad when his caravan *(Qafila)* was attacked by a sixty man band of highwaymen. They demanded each member of the Qafila to hand over any valuables they had on their person. Unknown to them Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) was carrying the forty gold coins which his mother had sown to the inside of the garment he was wearing for safekeeping. Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) refused to disobey his mother's noble instruction not to lie and when one of the bandits asked him if he had any valuables he volunteered the whereabouts of the coins but the bandit did not

[6] Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis. Pg.124.

believe him. A second bandit then asked Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) the same question and he again said that forty gold coins were in his jacket but the second bandit also didn't believe him. When the leader of the robbers heard of what Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) had said he ordered that the stitching be undone and to his utter astonishment the coins were there. This great act of honesty reduced the leader of the robbers to a great state of humility and he asked Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra)[7], *'When your money was safe, what compelled you to insist that you had it and say where it was hidden'*, to which the great Sheikh replied, *'I must tell the truth under any circumstances, as I promised to my mother'* (سُبْحَانَ الله). The leader was reduced to tears and in the spirit of repentance he said, *'I reneged on my promise to the One Who created me. I stole and killed. What will happen to me?'*. Before the great Sheikh could reply the other highwaymen, filled with the fear of Allah (swt), interjected and uttered the most unpredictable words, *'You have been our leader all these years in sinning. Now also be our leader in repenting'.* The highwaymen then took the hand of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani (ra) and offered their bay'ah (pledge of allegiance) and sought the repentance of Almighty Allah (swt). It is here necessary to pause for a moment and reflect upon a beautiful observation. Towards the end of the life of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) saints and great friends of Allah (swt) would flock towards him in hoards so as to offer their bay'ah at his hand yet the first people to offer their bay'ah at his blessed hand were sixty thieves and killers. Indeed almighty Allah's (swt) Mercy knows no limit.

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ, سُبْحَانَ اللهِ رِضَا نَفْسِهِ, سُبْحَانَ اللهِ رِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ, سُبْحَانَ اللهِ مِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ

'Glory be to Allah, as many times as the number of His creatures; Glory be to Allah to the extent of His being's pleasure; Glory be to Allah equal to the weight of His Thrown; Glory be to Allah equal to the ink that may be is recording the words (for His Praise)'

On entering Baghdad Sheikh Abdul Qadir began his studies in which, under the tutelage of some of the best teachers in the Islamic word[8], he reached an outstanding level of understanding in the following sciences[9],

1. Fiqah (Jurisprudence)
2. Tafsir (Commentary of the Holy Qur'an)
3. Sunnah of the Holy Prophet
4. Hadith (Traditions of the Holy Prophet(saw))

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[7] Secret of Secrets. Pg.XV.

[8] Of his teachers included Hadhrat Abu Zakariyya Yahya Tabrizi who was the principle of one of the greatest places of learning in Islamic history, the Nizamiyya. A detailed outline of the formal training of the great Sheikh is beyond the remit of this article. For further reading see: The Secret of the Secrets. Shayn Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti. pp.3-13.

[9] Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis. Pg.125

5. Arab Literature

After a long period of study he was appointed as the principle of the Hanbali institute of learning (Madrassa Babul Ajaz) which he held for some thirty years. This was the basic training of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) however he also had a deep passion to push beyond the orthodox methods of understanding and delve into the deeper meanings of the Holy Qur'an.

In similar fashion to the Promised Messiah (as), Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) underwent a period of deep reflection and seclusion during which he distanced himself from all worldly affairs *(Hayatad-Dunya)*. His spiritual journey lasted some twenty-five years in which he travelled across the baron desert and ruins in the area around Baghdad living in complete seclusion. During this time he would refrain from engaging any person or action which may have distracted him from annihilating his blessed heart in the remembrance of Almighty Allah *(Dhikr Illahi)*, for Allah (swt) informs us in the Holy Qur'an,

((الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ اللّهِ أَلاَ بِذِكْرِ اللّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ))

> *"Those who believe, and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Aye! It is the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort" (13:29)*

The Promised Messiah (as) underwent years of seclusion and meditation in Qadian and other places. Explaining his period of seclusion in Sialkot the Promised Messiah (as) writes[10],

> *"… you must at least have noticed how thousands gathered at the railway station to welcome me at my arrival in this city* (Sialkot) *and how hundreds of men and women pledged allegiance at my hand. Indeed, I am the same person who lived in this very town for seven years prior to Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, and no one knew me or my circumstances. Just imagine how this prophecy was made in Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya as much as twenty-four years ago, long before this fame and renown, when I was of little consequence in the eyes of the people. As I have said, even though I lived in this town for about seven years before the writing of Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, only a few among you gentlemen could claim to know me, for I was then an anonymous person, a mere solitary soul among the multitudes, with no significance in the eyes of the people. Nevertheless, those were very sweet times for me because I enjoyed total solitude among the multitude, and I was a unity in diversity. I lived in the city like a dweller in the wilderness. I love Sialkot as I love Qadian because some of my early years were spent here and I walked around a great deal in the streets of this city. Hakim Hassam-ud-Din, a respectable gentleman and sincere friend from those days, who even then had great affection for me, can testify to the times I lived through, and what an obscure person I was."*

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[10] Lecture Sialkot. pp.60-61.

Seclusion, or what the great Sufis have labelled as Khalwah, is an act by which many great saints and indeed the greatest of creation Hadhrat Mohammad (saw) have commonly practiced. During this period of reflection man shuns away the temptations and distractions of the world and invests his time in serious contemplation and prayer developing a greater relationship with almighty Allah. In his Malfoozat Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) offers a saintly description of the spiritual journey which all great lovers and servants of Allah (swt) must embark upon, he writes[11],

> *"The heart of the son of Adam must continue to travel along the path of good and evil, honor and humiliation, wealth and poverty, until he finally acknowledges that all blessings are due to Allah (Almighty and Glorious is He). This means gratitude [shukr]–and gratitude is an act of obedience [ta'a] performed without moving the tongue and the limbs of the body–and patient endurance of misfortune. He must admit his sins and offenses until, having taken his last step on the good side and his last step on the bad side, there he is at the King's door. He has taken the step of gratitude and the step of patience, with divine help [tawfiq] as the guide. He has seen the King's door, and beyond it he can see things that no eye ever saw, that no ear ever heard of, and that never occurred to any human heart. The alternating sequence of good moves and bad moves is at an end; now comes the turn of conversation, discourse and sitting in company [with the Lord]."*

One of the many blessings which Allah (swt) showered upon this great servant of His was the honourable station of Mujadadiyat. Commenting on this the Promised Messiah (as) not only lists him as a Mujadid and reviver of Islamic unity but ranks him first among the long line of Mujadideen. He (as) asserts this by writing[12],

> *We can furnish conclusive proof to every seeker after truth that from the time of our lord and master the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] up to this day, in every century there have appeared men of God through whom God Almighty has guided other people by the display of heavenly signs. Of these were Sayyed 'Abd-ul-Qadir Jilani, Abu-al-Hasan Kharqani, Abu Yazid Bistami, Junaid Baghdadi, Mohy-ud-Din Ibne-'Arabi, Dhunnun Misri, Mu'in-ud-Din Chishti Ajmeri, Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiar Kaki, Farid-ud-Din Pakpatni, Nizam-ud-Din Dehlvi, Shah Wali-ullah Dehlvi, and Sheikh Ahmad Sarhandi (Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him)."*

With exceptional praise the Promised Messiah (as) proceeds to describe Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) and the other Awliyaa Ullah in the following remarkable terms[13],

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[11] Malfoozat. Ex.1.
[12] Kitab-ul-Bariyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 13, pp. 91-92
[13] Anjam-e-Atham, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 11, pp. 63-64, footnote

"So many extraordinary happenings concerning them are set out in the books of the learned ones that even a very bigoted opponent has to admit that these people manifested extraordinary signs and miracles. I tell you truly that through my research, so far as it is possible for one to discover about the past, I have come to the conclusion that the number of heavenly signs in support of Islam and as a testimony of the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] which have been manifested through the Auliya' of this Ummah, is not to be equalled in the history of other religions. Islam is the only religion which has progressed through heavenly signs, and its numberless lights and blessings have ever demonstrated the existence of God Almighty as if He is visible close at hand."

In attaining such a high spiritual status a Wali-ullah *(friend of Allah)* is safeguarded and protected by Almighty Allah from Satan's tricks. The temptations of Satan the Accursed are often perceived as only targeting people of weak faith *(Imaan)*, however, in reality righteous people are also made to undergo the wicked tests of Satan. It has long been the downfall of many a pious person that he/she has kept firm upon the *'Straight Path' (Siratul Mustaqeem)* but faltered by allowing the trickery of Satan to manipulate some of their weak traits such as pride, lust, greed, etc. The characteristics of Satan's trickery, and the key to overcoming them, are made manifest to mankind by Almighty Allah Who Says,

((إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاء فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلاَةِ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ))

[5:92] *Satan seeks only to create enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and the game of chance, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allah and from Prayer. Then will you keep back?*

In this same vain Satan the accursed famously attempted to tempt Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) away from the remembrance of Allah (swt) during his period of seclusion. The exact account of what took place is narrated to us by the Promised Messiah (as) as follows[14],

"Not every saint or sufi can repel and expose the filth of satanic suggestion as Jesusas did with the whip of his light. Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilanira says, "I too received a satanic inspiration once. Satan said: 'O Abdul Qadir! all your prayers are accepted. From now on whatsoever is forbidden to others is lawful to you. You are even exempt from obligatory prayers. Do whatever you please.' At this, I said, 'Be off O Satan! how can something that was not permissible for the Holy Prophetsa be permissible for me!' After this, Satan disappeared from my sight along with his golden throne."

[14] Darurat-ul-Imam, p. 27-28

Now, when even a man of God and a unique human like Abdul Qadirra received a satanic inspiration, how can ordinary humans, who have not yet fully accomplished their spiritual journey, be secure against it, for—unlike Sayyid Abdul Qadirra and Jesusas—they lack the spiritual eyes with which to recognize satanic inspirations."

The tricks of Satan were to no avail in this instance and Allah (swt) fulfilled His promise,

((إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَواْ إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُواْ فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ))

[7:202] *As to those who are righteous, when an evil suggestion from Satan assails them, they remember Allah and behold! they begin to see aright.*

On returning to Baghdad from his spiritual journey Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) faced a tribulation which Allah (swt) permitted him to overcome with majestic wisdom. Many of the Islamic elite of Baghdad were perturbed by the return of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) who, due to his great reputation and spiritual status, had amassed a large following of disciples. The scholars gathered and devised a way by which they could send a clear message to Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) indicating their displeasure at his presence in Baghdad. They ordered a large vessel be filled to the brim and sent it to the quarters of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra). Upon seeing the container the students of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) were baffled as to the meaning behind the gesture, however, the wise Sheikh instantly realised the message. The container represented Baghdad and the water represented the scholars (people of knowledge) in Baghdad meaning that Baghdad was full and did not require a new Sheikh such as Abdul Qadir (ra). With an ingenious stroke of wisdom the Sheikh plucked a rose which he then floated on top of the water. He then ordered the vessel be taken back to the senders who, on seeing it, immediately acknowledged the great spiritual wisdom of the Sheikh and assigned him the title *'The Rose of Baghdad'*.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) lived a long and meaningful life which he spent in the remembrance of Allah (swt) and humbly imparting his knowledge to thousands of students. He was a fearless person and never hesitated to defend absolute justice if he felt that an injustice had been committed. In one instance it is reported that the Caliph of the time appointed an unjust man as the head Qadi (judge) and Sheikh Abdul Qadir openly admonished the Caliph saying[15], *'You have appointed the worst tyrant as judge over the believers. Let us see how you will answer yourself tomorrow when you will be presented to the great judge. The Lord of the Universe!'*, on hearing this the Caliph was immediately filled with the fear of Allah (swt) and dismissed the judge as he wept.

[15] Secret of Secrets. Pg.XXI.

It has been related that in the final days which Sheikh Abdul Qadir's (ra) spent on this earth he was asked by his son if he felt pain to which he replied, *'all of me aches except for my heart. There is no pain in it for it is with Allah'*. Another son of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) asked the great Sheikh for some parting advice to which he said, *' Fear Allah and none other. Hope from Allah and entrust all your needs in him; hope and want nothing from anyone except him. Rely on Allah and on none other. Unite with Him, unite with Him, unite with Him'*.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani's (ra) sole departed this earth in 561 A.H. (1166 C.E.) at the age of 91. He left behind a reported forty-nine children, the great Islamic institution of the Qadiriyyah and a wealth of books which have been a great source of knowledge for the Ummah for more than 800 years. He left this earth with the parting words, *'There is no god but Allah and Mohammad is His messenger'*.

Writings of the Promised Messiah

In a revelation the Promised Messiah (as) was granted the title of *'Sultan Abdul Qadir'* which he explains is a title which illustrates his high spiritual station. He interestingly likens this to a famous saying of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra). Explaining this the Promised Messiah (as) writes[16],

> *In this revelation, God has named me Sultan Abdul Qadir, meaning that as a Sultan rules over others, in the same way I have been invested with authority over all those who seek spiritual communion with the Divine. Such communion cannot be maintained without obedience to me. This revelation resembles an observation of Syed Abdul Qadir Gilani (may Allah be pleased with him): I have my foot on the neck of every saint."*

There are other such instances in which the Promised Messiah (as) explains his blessed revelations by way of comparison to a saying of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra). An example of this is related in a dream in which the Promised Messiah (as) saw his Lord in the form of his father, he (as) writes[17],

> *"Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah have mercy on him) has said: I have seen my Lord in the form of my father. I too have had the same experience. My father was a man of impressive presence and possessed great courage and high resolve. I saw him seated on a glorious throne and it was conveyed to me that he was God.*
>
> *The point of it is that as a father is deeply affectionate and compassionate and is most closely related, a vision of God Almighty, in the form of one's father is a*

[16] Al-Hakam, Vol. XI, No. 11, March 31, 1907, p. 2
[17] Al-Hakam Vol. VI No. 17 May 10, 1902 p. 7

manifestation of God's favour, His closeness, and His deep love. That is why the Holy Quran says:

'Remember God with the same fervour as you were wont to remember your fathers or even with greater fervour' (2:20)

and one of my revelations also says: You are to Me like My children. This vision is an illustration of the verse of the Quran I have just referred to".

A common theme within the writings of the Promised Messiah (as) regarding Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) is prayer and the great source of spiritual power it holds for a sincere believer. The Promised Messiah (as) often draws upon the sayings and writings of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) to highlight that one cannot hope to benefit from prayer if his prayer is not born out of strict obedience to the Will of Almighty Allah. Addressing this subject the Promised Messiah (as) writes[18],

" The Sufis say that a person's absolute dependence upon God does not become perfect without his being able to distinguish the proper place and occasion for supplication. It has been said that a Sufi does not pray till he recognizes that it is time for prayer. Sayyed 'Abd-ul-Qadir Jilani (may Allah be pleased with him) has said that through prayer an unfortunate one is rendered fortunate. He has even gone so far as to affirm that deeply hidden matters, which resemble an absolute decree, can also be averted by prayer. In short it should always be remembered in connection with prayer that sometimes God Almighty requires obedience to His own will and at other times He grants the supplication of a servant of His. In other words He deals with His servant like a friend. The prayers of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) were accepted on a grand scale and corresponding to this he stood very high in bowing to the will of God and in accepting it cheerfully. He lost eleven children, but he never asked "Why?"

In another book of the Promised Messiah (as) he further expands the subject of prayer by taking a page from a book of Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) *(Futuhul Ghaib)* and uses it to beautifully describe the need for a believer to remove all worldly obstacles from his/her path towards Allah (swt). The Promised Messiah (as) writes[19],

"I wish to reproduce the text and translation of what Qutub-e-Rabbani and Ghauth-e-Subhani Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilanira has written in his book Futuhul Ghaib, regarding the effect of the prayers and attention of the perfect men of God, based upon his own personal experiences. The meaning of the following excerpt is that the only testimony recognized in any field is that of a person who is well experienced in that*

[18] Malfuzat, vol. III, pp. 224-226
[19] Barakatud Du'a, p. 24-26, ft. 13

particular field. Thus, only the person who enjoys a relationship of true sincerity and love with God can truly understand the philosophy of the acceptance of prayer. Therefore, to enquire about this holy philosophy from Sayyid Ahmad Khan Sahib is like seeking the remedy of a human illness from a veterinary surgeon. If Sayyid Sahib were to expound the relationship between a worldly government and its subjects, he would no doubt be qualified to do so; but Godly affairs are known only to godly persons. The excerpt is as follows:

فَاجْعَلْ أَنْتَ أَجْمِلَتَكَ وَ أَجْزَائَكَ أَصْنَاماً مَعَ سَائِرِ الْخَلْقِ وَ لَا
تُطِعْ شَيْئاً مِّنْ ذَالِكَ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعْهُ جُمْلَةً فَتَكُوْنَ كِبْرِيْتاً أَحْمَرَ فَلَا
تَكَادُ تَرَى فَحِيْنَئِذٍ تَكُوْنُ وَارِثَ كُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَ رَسُوْلٍ وَ بِكَ تُخْتَمُ
الْوِلَايَةُ وَ تَنْكَشِفُ الْكُرُوْبُ وَ بِكَ تَسْقِي الْغُيُوْثُ وَ بِكَ تَنْبُتُ
الزُّرُوْعُ وَ بِكَ تُدْفَعُ الْبَلَايَا وَ الْمِحَنُ عَنِ الْخَاصِّ وَ الْعَامِّ وَ
أَهْلِ الثُّغُوْرِ وَ تُقَلِّبُكَ يَدُ الْقُدْرَةِ وَ يَدْعُوْكَ لِسَانُ الْأَزَلِ وَ تَنْزِلُ
مَنَازِلَ مَنْ سَلَفَ مِنْ أُولِي الْعِلْمِ وَ يُرَدُّ عَلَيْكَ التَّكْوِيْنُ وَ خَرْقُ
الْعَادَاتِ وَ تُؤْمَنُ عَلَى الْأَسْرَارِ وَ الْعُلُوْمِ اللَّدُنِّيَّةِ وَ غَرَائِبِهَا

That is to say, if you desire to become an accepted one of God, then believe with utmost certainty and understand that your hands, your feet, your tongue, your eyes, and your whole being, and all its organs, are like idols in your way, and all other creation is similarly an idol barring your path. Your children, your wife, the worldly objectives you wish to achieve, worldly riches, worldly honour and prestige, every worldly hope and fear, your reliance or trust in anyone or anything, your fear of being harmed by anyone, all these are idols in your way. So do not become subservient to any of these idols, and do not lose your way in pursuit of them. That is, have recourse to them within the bounds of the shariah and the way of the righteous. If you succeed in this you will become [precious as] the red brimstone and your status will be raised beyond people's imagination, and God shall make you heir to His Prophets and Messengersas, which means that all their knowledge, wisdom and blessings, which had disappeared into obscurity and oblivion, will be granted afresh to you, and you will reach the highest level of sainthood, and none after you shall be able to rise higher. Your prayers, your fortified resolve, and your blessings will relieve people of their anguish; the famine-stricken will be granted rain and crops will grow; the affliction and anguish of every low and high, and even the troubles of kings shall be alleviated through your attention and prayers; the Hand of Providence shall be with you, whichever direction it takes you will be guided in the same way; the Eternal Voice will beckon you to itself, which means that whatever flows from your tongue will be

from God and it will be blessed; and you will be made a successor to all the righteous servants of Allah who were granted knowledge before you; a kind of power of creation will be bestowed on you, i.e., your attention and your prayer will exercise control in the world; if you then wish to turn the existing into non-existing, and vice versa, it will come to pass; extraordinary and miraculous things will take place at your hand; Divine secrets shall be revealed to you and you shall be given understanding of subtle and profound matters of Divine knowledge, of which you are considered to be worthy and deserving."

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra) also narrates a vision involving Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) which indicated to Huzur (ra) that he should write a book titled *'Way of the Seekers' (Minhajul Talibeen).* Coincidentally the ongoing theme of prayer remains constant, Huzur (ra) explains[20],

''As I began I was reminded of yet another thing. It was a long forgotten vision that I saw soon after the death of the Promised Messiah -- peace be on him. At the time I did not realise its significance. In the vision, I found myself sitting on a prayer mat after prayer. In my hand I am holding a book about which I am told is by Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani. The name of the book is Minhaj al-Talibin (Way of the Seekers). I read the book and put it aside. I then recalled that the book was to be returned to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I, and I begin to look for it. During the search I found another book. Simultaneously I found myself repeating the words:

''No one knows about the hosts of Thy Lord, except He Himself. ''

I thought there was a book bearing that title by Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, and I should find it. So I enquired from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I, who told me that there was no book with just that title but that there was one with a somewhat similar title, namely Ghaniyyat al-Talibin. I continued my search and found that there was no such book by Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani or anyone else. It then occurred to me that it might be that I myself would have the opportunity to write a book with that title. The name Abdul Qadir indicated that the book would be the result not of my own thinking so much as the result of special understanding bestowed upon me by God. Therefore, I decided to call this speech Minhaj al-Talibin."

Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) was most certainly a great servant of Allah (swt) and was loved immensely by the Promised Messiah (as). Indeed, both individuals were two tremendous lovers of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). Both individuals worked tirelessly day and night for the cause of Allah (swt) until old

[20] The Way of the Seekers, Chapter Titles: The Name Mihajut Talibin

age overtook them and there outer shells were warn with the inevitable aches and pains attached to a lifetime of unflagging service in the cause of Allah (swt). May Allah (swt) Grant Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra) a lofty station in heaven and enable all seekers of truth to follow the goodness of his pure and righteous example, Insha-Allah. Ameen

I conclude with a majestic quotation of the Promised Messiah (as) which encapsulates the love which he had for Sheikh Abdul Qadir (ra):

> *''Once I saw in a vision that Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani (may Allah mercy on him) has come and after bathing me with warm water clothed me with a new dress. And standing near the circular room said, come we stand together and measure our height. Then he stood on my right shoulder to shoulder, and we were equal.''* (Al-Hakam Vol-37 No:33 September 14, 1934).

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين